



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 31, 2017

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES MLS ALL-STAR GAME PRESENTED BY TARGET WILL
BE HELD AT SOLDIER FIELD**

FS1, Univision Deportes, TSN and TVA Sports to televise the game in the U.S. and Canada

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Major League Soccer Commissioner Don Garber to announce the 2017 MLS All-Star Game presented by Target will be played on August 2, at Soldier Field in Chicago, Ill.

"Soccer is a global sport and Chicago is the ideal global city to host this important game," Mayor Emanuel said. "This match will not just bring more world-class soccer to the city, it will help inspire future generations of soccer stars who are learning the game on playgrounds and fields in neighborhoods throughout the city of Chicago."

Mayor Emanuel and Commissioner Garber were joined by Chicago Fire Owner and Chairman Andrew Hauptman, Michael Kelly, General Superintendent and CEO, Chicago Park District, Executive Director of the Chicago Sports Commission Kara Bachman, and Target Vice President of Marketing William White at Soldier Field to make the announcement.

In a landmark, multi-year partnership agreement announced earlier this month, Target became an official partner of Major League Soccer. The 2017 MLS All-Star Game presented by Target is the latest step in the retailer's largest-ever push into team sports. The annual midsummer showcase will feature the best in MLS hosting one of the top clubs in the world, broadcast live on FS1, UDN and UniMás in the United States, TSN and TVA Sports in Canada, and in more than 170 countries across the globe.

In addition to the match, the city of Chicago will host nearly a week of events surrounding the game, including concerts, community service initiatives, player appearances, and the fourth annual MLS Homegrown Game, featuring the best homegrown players from across the league.

Veljko Paunovic, the head coach of the Chicago Fire, will manage the All-Star Team. The opponent for the 2017 MLS All-Star Game presented by Target will be announced at a later date.

Soldier Field, with a capacity of 61,500, has played host to some of the most exciting sporting and entertainment events in the world including CONCACAF Gold Cup matches, World Cup Qualifiers, 1994 FIFA World Cup matches, and last summer's Copa America Centenario. Not only has Soldier Field hosted a wealth of international soccer events, the venerable Chicago landmark also has a rich MLS legacy, as it was home to the Chicago Fire for the club's first four seasons, from 1998-2001, then again from 2003-2005. The Fire owned a 62-23-10 record (.705 winning percentage) in their home games played at Soldier Field, a span which also includes the club's three appearances in MLS Cup.

As the host club for the 2017 MLS All-Star Game presented by Target, the Chicago Fire stands at the center of burgeoning soccer market boasting 3.4 million soccer fans and nearly a million participants. The club is directly affiliated with more than 150 regional soccer organizations, interacts with more than 70,000 individuals annually through community soccer outreach programs, and manages a youth club with more than 16,000 players and the city's largest adult recreational league, with more than 14,000 participants.

While this is the first MLS All-Star Game to be played at Soldier Field, it's the second time the MLS midsummer classic has been played in the Chicagoland area. In 2006, the MLS All-Stars defeated England's Chelsea FC 1-0 in a match played at Toyota Park in Bridgeview, Ill. Dwayne De Rosario scored the game's only goal for the MLS All-Stars.

The MLS All-Stars have faced international opponents 14 times in the event's 22-year history, posting a record of 9-4-1 against some of the world's most decorated clubs. Previous opponents have included Manchester United (2010 and 2011), Everton FC (2009), Chelsea FC (2006 and 2012), AS Roma (2013), Bayern Munich (2014), Tottenham Hotspur (2015), and most recently Arsenal FC (2016).

MLS ALL-STAR GAMES

1996: East 3, West 2 (E. Rutherford, N.J.)

1997: East 5, West 4 (E. Rutherford, N.J.)

1998: MLS USA 6, MLS World 1 (Orlando, Fla.)

1999: West 6, East 4 (San Diego, Calif.)

2000: East 9, West 4 (Columbus, Ohio)

2001: East 6, West 6 (San Jose, Calif.)

2002: MLS 3, U.S. National Team 2 (Washington, D.C.)

2003: MLS 3, CD Guadalajara 1 (Carson, Calif.)

2004: East 3, West 2 (Washington, D.C.)

2005: MLS 4, Fulham FC 1 (Columbus, Ohio)

2006: MLS 1, Chelsea FC 0 (Bridgeview, Ill.)

2007: MLS 2, Celtic FC 0 (Commerce City, Colo.)
2008: MLS 3, West Ham United FC 2 (Toronto, Ont., Canada)
2009: MLS 1, Everton FC 1 (Everton 4-3 pen) (Sandy, Utah)
2010: MLS 2, Manchester United FC 5 (Houston, Texas)
2011: MLS 0, Manchester United FC 4 (Harrison, N.J.)
2012: MLS 3, Chelsea FC 2 (Chester, Pa.)
2013: MLS 1, AS Roma 3 (Kansas City, Kan.)
2014: MLS 2, FC Bayern Munich 1 (Portland, Ore.)
2015: MLS 2, Tottenham Hotspur 1 (Denver, Colo.)
2016: MLS 1, Arsenal FC 2 (San Jose, Calif.)

www.MLSsoccer.com

###